



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, DC 20380-0001

MCO 5213.7C
ARDB
4 May 90

MARINE CORPS ORDER 5213.7C

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Distribution List

Subj: MARINE CORPS FORMS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Ref: (a) FIRMR 201-45 (NOTAL)
(b) SECNAVINST 5213.10C (NOTAL)
(c) MCO P4400.84C
(d) SL-8-09993A (NOTAL)
(e) MCO P5600.31F

Encl: (1) Guidance in Establishing Local Forms Management Programs

1. Purpose. To implement policy and provide guidance for managing forms in the Marine Corps.

2. Cancellation. MCO 5211.3 and MCO 5213.7B.

3. Information

a. Reference (a) identifies forms management as an element of the Records Management Program and requires each Federal agency to establish and maintain a continuing forms management program for those forms with an annual use of 100 copies or more. Reference (b) establishes the Secretary of the Navy's policy for managing forms, assigns responsibility, and provides guidance and procedures for implementing forms management programs in the Department of the Navy. References (c) and (d) provide instructions for requisitioning blank forms from supply systems stock and information regarding the stock funding aspect of blank forms. Reference (e) contains information on the local printing of blank forms.

b. Enclosure (1) provides guidance in establishing local forms management programs. Appendix A to enclosure (1) contains information regarding electronic or computer-generated forms. Appendix B to enclosure (1) outlines the staffing and procedure cycle of a form from creation to final printing.

c. The management and control of forms prepared, printed, and controlled with nonappropriated funds are exempt from the provisions of this Order.

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4. Policy. It is the policy of the Commandant of the Marine Corps that:

a. Marine Corps field commands establish and maintain effective forms management programs using this directive as a guide.

b. The Marine Corps Forms Management Program is reviewed regularly to determine the adequacy of the system and its effectiveness in meeting the Marine Corps mission.

c. Periodic evaluation of Marine Corps forms is conducted for effectiveness, improvement, elimination, duplication, and/or consolidation, as appropriate.

d. Duplication of forms using microcomputers has adequate oversight and approval procedures for effective control.

e. Approval of proposed or existing forms is based on a justified need.

f. Reproduction costs are reduced and productivity is improved by appropriately designing and printing forms.

g. Forms management concepts, benefits, and training are promoted within the Marine Corps.

5. Objectives. The objectives of the Marine Corps Forms Management Program are to:

a. Eliminate unnecessary forms by justifying the need for existing and proposed forms.

b. Reduce systems operating costs and increase systems efficiency by developing forms that are easy to fill in, read, transmit, process, and retrieve.

c. Ensure that only approved forms are used.

d. Prevent and eliminate unnecessary and duplicate forms and consolidate those serving like or similar functions.

6. Summary of Revision. This Order is a major revision and should be read in its entirety. This revision contains procedures and guidelines for use by forms managers and forms sponsors/originators in managing and controlling manual, electronic, and computer-generated forms and in establishing local forms management programs.

7. Responsibilities

a. The Commandant of the Marine Corps (ARDB) is responsible for administering the Marine Corps Forms Management Program, and as such is responsible for:

(1) Issuing policy, procedures, and guidance for managing forms in the Marine Corps.

(2) Controlling, approving, and designing forms for use by the Marine Corps; controlling the adoption of NAVMC, NAVMC HQ, and other Government agency forms prescribed for Marine Corps use.

(3) Reviewing all request for new forms and all reprints or revisions of existing forms.

(4) Maintaining a historical case file for each controlled form. This file includes information on the purpose, development, use, clearance, costing, publication, and disposition of each form approved for use by the Marine Corps.

(5) Maintaining an inventory of all current forms approved for use in the Marine Corps.

(6) Coordinating the testing of automated data processing (ADP) forms.

(7) Serving as Marine Corps liaison with higher headquarters and with other Government agencies in matters relating to forms management.

(8) Providing guidance and assistance to field activities in establishing forms management programs.

b. Marine Corps commanders are responsible for the supervision and execution of forms management programs within their respective commands, and as such will:

(1) Establish a forms management program in support of the objectives outlined in this Order.

(2) Designate a forms manager to administer the local forms management program.

(3) Conduct periodic reviews aimed at improving forms procedures and reducing the forms inventory.

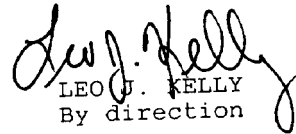
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(4) Submit recommendations for improvement in the Marine Corps Forms Management Program to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (ARDB).

8. Records Disposition. Forms managers will retain their historical files until 10 years after the forms become obsolete; forms sponsors/originators will retain their file until 2 years after the forms become obsolete. All other form files will be destroyed immediately upon obsolescence of the form.

9. Action. Commands will use this Order, applying the guidance provided as required, in administering local forms management programs.

10. Reserve Applicability. This Order is applicable to the Marine Corps Reserve.


LEO J. KELLY
By direction

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GUIDANCE IN ESTABLISHING LOCAL FORMS
MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

1. Definitions

a. Forms Management. Forms management consists of two elements:

(1) Forms analysis - the development or improvement of data elements and forms design on proposed or existing forms, and

(2) Forms control - the review and coordination of forms to ensure efficient response to management requirements.

b. Forms Manager. An individual assigned the responsibility for forms management at the local level. The manager maintains liaison with the Marine Corps Forms Manager.

c. Sponsor/Originator. An individual or office assuming responsibility for initiating a form. The sponsor/originator will decide what items to be included on the form, the estimated annual usage, and a possible stocking point. This information will be submitted to the forms manager for approval.

d. Forms. Any document including letters, postcards, memorandums or certificates, printed or otherwise reproduced with space for inserting data, descriptive material, or addresses designed to structure the arrangement of information.

(1) Report Form. Forms that require information from persons are considered reporting requirements and must be submitted to the reports control manager for appropriate action.

(2) Bootleg Form. An uncontrolled form, issued without coordination with the forms manager. Bootleg forms are unauthorized.

(3) Electronic Form. A form created, transmitted, filled-in, filed, and destroyed electronically and can be reproduced from computer memory. (Appendix B to this enclosure provides general information about electronic and computer-generated forms.)

(4) Computer-Generated Form. A form designed on pin-feed paper to be used in various computer systems.

(5) One-Time Form. A form developed for use with a specific project which has an established termination date.

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(6) Test Form. A form developed to test a system or procedure prior to its permanent adoption. Test forms should not be used more than 1 year.

(7) Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Form. An OCR form designed for compatibility with OCR equipment which enables a machine to read by optical means human readable characters. Specifications for the design and composition of most OCR forms are peculiar to specific equipment models (though certain "universal" typefaces have been developed) to the extent that design and composition is usually a part of the forms and/or equipment procurement contract. Since OCR forms design is so closely related to proprietary specifications and systems requirements, forms managers should consult OCR equipment manufacturers for assistance.

e. Format. An arrangement of simple data items in a prescribed sequence where the number or frequency of responses is limited. Formats may be used where the space required for response varies widely, or where transmittal and reply by message is required due to operational necessity. Formats should not be used in place of a standardized form or in the belief that a format will expedite a project. Formats often place an unnecessary burden on the respondent and can even fail to provide the needed data.

f. Form Title. A title assigned by the forms manager after evaluation of the contents of the form. The standard subject identification code (SSIC) is shown in parentheses following the form title.

g. Form Number. A symbol of identification and approval assigned to a form by the organizational unit responsible for forms management. The form number is composed of a prefix consisting of an abbreviation of the activity/agency designation, a sequential number, and an edition date.

2. Forms used by Marine Corps are categorized as follows:

a. Internal. Forms created by and used within Marine Corps such as NAVMC and NAVMC HQ forms.

b. Interagency. Forms used to collect information from 10 or more Federal agencies. Examples are Department of Defense (DD), Optional Forms (OF), and Navy Comptroller (NAVCOMPT) forms.

c. Public Use. Forms used to collect information from 10 or more members of the public or persons. Examples are NAVMC 10943- MCJROTC Unit/School Strength Report, NAVMC 11172 - USMC Officer Separation Questionnaire, NAVMC 11173 - USMC Enlisted Separation Questionnaire, and IRS 1040 - Federal Tax Return.

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d. Standard. Forms prescribed by a Federal agency and approved by GSA for mandatory use throughout the Federal Government. Example are SF 135 - Records Transmittal and Receipt, SF 1169 - U.S. Government Transportation Request, and SF 1610 - Request and Authorization for TDY Travel of DoD Personnel.

e. Optional. Forms developed for use in two or more agencies and approved by GSA for nonmandatory use. Examples are OF 128 - Composite Property Record Card, OF 189 - Travel Reimbursement Voucher, and OF 257 - Interoffice Document Transfer Record.

3. Forms Management is one of the records creation aspects of the Records Management Program. Analysis and control are integral parts of the forms management program.

a. Analysis is the development and/or improvement of data elements and forms design on proposed or existing forms. The forms manager must:

(1) Construct items to obtain all needed information. Ensure that instructions for completing the form, when needed, are clear to avoid misinterpretation.

(2) Ensure that each item on the form will satisfy a current need or known future requirement. Do not establish a form to meet some possible future need. Ensure that all information requested will be used by the recipient of the completed form.

(3) Determine the need by analyzing the answers to the following questions:

(a) Is the information required under the cognizance of the sponsor/originating office?

(b) Is there a need for all the information requested?

(c) How will the information be used?

(d) Can the information be obtained from another source?

(e) Is the information capable of misinterpretation? Could it be more simply stated?

(4) Arrange each data item in logical format for easy completion by the preparing organization and for efficient use by the receiving organization.

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(5) Distribute completed forms on a "need-to-act" or "need-to-know" basis; do not distribute courtesy copies.

b. Control is the review and coordination of forms to ensure efficient response to management requirements. The major areas of forms control are: assigning a form number and an SSIC, establishing printing requirements, and stocking locations.

(1) Form Numbers and SSIC's. Form numbers and SSIC's are assigned by the forms manager. Form numbers are usually assigned sequentially and are used to file the form and all related material. SSIC's are selected from SECNAVINST 5210.11. The SSIC can be used to construct a master computer file. This file can assist in the review process, bringing all related subjects together, thus enabling the forms manager to consolidate like forms, identify duplicate forms, and reject proposed forms when identical or similar forms are already in the system.

(2) Printing Requirements and Stocking Locations

(a) Forms may be printed by entering the form in the Marine Corps Supply System for Marine Corps-wide use; forms may be entered into the print-on-demand system; or forms may be printed by local printing offices for internal stocking.

(b) Forms printed for Marine Corps-wide use will automatically be stocked at the Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany, Georgia; forms ordered from the print-on-demand will be stocked by the ordering command; and locally printed forms may be stocked in the command's supply room, sponsor's/originator's or user's office. The sponsor/originator is responsible for providing the information for obtaining the form. This information is located in the requiring directive and contains the form number, revision date, title, stock number, or ordering address.

NOTE: Including a blank form in directives is not authorized; however, if a blank form is needed for information purposes, the word "SAMPLE" must be printed across the body of the form so that the form cannot be taken out of the directive and reproduced. (Not applicable when "partial fill-in" is used in directives or other publications to denote proper use of the form.) The statement "Local reproduction is authorized." is no longer an approved statement and should not be used. In rare instances, usage of a form may be so low that the form may be included in the directive and removed for use. In this case, the forms manager will make the final decision.

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(c) Certain printed items with limited blank spaces for insertion of specified data may be exempt from forms management unless it is advantageous to number them for control, reference, printing, stocking, and requisitioning; the information solicited is covered by the Privacy Act or the information solicited qualifies it to be a public-use form. Examples of forms that may be exempt are:

- Diplomas
- Contract Provisions
- Cover Sheets
- Manuscript Covers
- Address Tags
- Folders
- Envelopes
- Formats
- Form Letters used to disseminate information

4. Appendix B to enclosure (1) is an example of staffing and review procedures as conducted by the forms manager at HQMC. It is provided as a guide to assist commands in tailoring their procedures to fit their specific needs.

5. Establishing the Program

a. Design the forms management program to make processing of paperwork and information easier and more economical. To properly manage the program, controls are needed in designing, printing, stocking, ordering, and distributing forms.

b. Implement standard procedures for handling requests for new forms, revisions to existing forms, reordering of forms stocked in a central location, and for reordering forms stocked by the user. Incorporate procedures in the local forms management directive.

c. Coordinate with the four areas in setting up procedures for forms management - printing, procurement, supply, and forms management. Forms management and supply must cooperate to establish procedures for inventory control, storage, and distribution of forms. Forms management responsibilities in the supply area involve establishing realistic reorder levels for each form so that ample time will be allowed for printing and review. Whoever stocks the forms should have the responsibility for replenishing the supply when it has reached a certain level.

d. The printing manager and the forms manager must coordinate procedures to assure that all requests for forms are reviewed by the forms manager prior to printing.

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e. Designate a local forms control officer/manager and publish a local directive for the forms management program.

f. Forms Managers

(1) Conduct an inventory of all forms currently in use in the organization.

(2) Establish a filing system to provide for two primary uses:

(a) Searching when a request for a new form is received.

(b) Periodic reviewing to consolidate forms and to analyze all the forms related to a user.

(3) Use a single historical file arranged by type and form number with a master computer file by SSIC. The historical file is usually filed by form number and consists of a folder for each form with a complete history of the form from its development to current status. Each historical file folder should contain the following:

(a) Two copies of the current edition of the form and one of each previous edition. Two copies of the current edition is retained so that one will remain intact for historical file purposes, and the other will be used as a working copy for subsequent changes.

(b) Rough drafts and/or working papers showing significant stages of development; and pertinent correspondence.

(c) Identification of the regulation or other issuance authorizing the use or purpose of the form. (Filing a directive in the files is discouraged since master directives are usually maintained as a separate activity file and are easily obtainable when needed.)

(d) The original request for approval of the form and any request for revision; names of all users.

(4) Document final approval for the printing or reproduction and issuance of the form.

(5) Maintain negative and/or camera-ready copy of last printed edition only.

(6) Maintain specifications for printing of the form including the number of copies printed.

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g. Maintain functional and system files, if necessary.

(1) The functional file, if required, identifies and collates forms functionally doing the same thing; provides quick location of all forms relating to the same subject; prevents the development of new forms when one already exists; assists in the location of forms when the number and title are unknown; and affords easy review and audit of the forms management program.

(2) The system file, when required, is based on a primary sort of information by the functions or operations of the organization. The system file includes all forms that are part of the major function.

h. The forms manager will conduct the following when reviewing proposed new forms or revisions to existing forms:

(1) For new forms, assign a form number and an SSIC. Select the SSIC from SECNAVINST 5210.11. Maintain a log of all numbers assigned.

(2) Review the requiring directive to ensure that all necessary information is included; coordinate same with the reports and records managers to ensure that all records and reporting requirements (if any) are met.

(3) Ensure that the title of the form corresponds with the subject matter.

(4) Ensure that the form does not violate the Privacy Act of 1974.

i. The forms manager must request the sponsor/originator accomplish the following when submitting approval of proposed new forms or revised forms:

(1) Initiate the request early in the forms development phase to allow sufficient time for forms analysis, composition, and printing.

(2) Draft a copy of the form, listing the data elements in logical order. If needed, include simple instructions for completing the required information.

(3) Prepare a directive/order to inform users of the existence of the form. For all new forms, include an "Availability" paragraph in the directive/order identifying the source of supply, stock number, and unit of issue for requisitioning purposes.

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(4) Decide how the form is to be printed and distributed, stocking point, estimated annual demand, and the number of responses expected.

(5) Submit a copy of the proposed form and a copy of the requiring directive to the forms manager.

j. Forms Replenishment

(1) Establish a reorder point for forms at the initial printing. If it is a simple flat sheet form, the print quantity and specifications will determine whether it will be printed in-house or sent to a commercial printer. If the form is a specialty item (snap-set, carbon interleaved snap-set, OCR, etc.), reordering will require additional time for the process. Actual printing time from the placement of the order to delivery could be from 2 weeks to 6 months. Review, analysis, redesign, and composition of the form require additional time.

(2) The form's use is an important factor. For example, a reorder level of 1,000 might be established for a form with a usage of 250-300 per month (4,000 annually). One-thousand would be a 3 to 4-month supply, and this amount would allow 6 weeks for the forms analyst to reevaluate the form for any revisions and 6 weeks for bidding and printing.

(3) Initiate form's replenishment when the form reaches its reorder level. The procedure should be simple and consistent with the paperwork requirements of the forms management program.

k. Forms managers use the forms index to catalogue assigned form numbers. Recommend periodic distribution of this index to sponsors/originators. Arrange in numerical sequence, list form number, title, edition date, supply location, and sponsor/originator code. Because it lists all available forms, it is a valuable tool in deleting obsolete forms, in ordering forms from supply, and in eliminating the creation of new forms.

l. Conduct program evaluation periodically. Information gathered can be used not only to improve the program, but also to support the need for a forms management program.

6. Beneficial Suggestions. Suggestions for improving the forms program must be provided to the forms manager for appropriate action. The forms manager will forward the suggestion to the sponsor/originator of the form for comments and approval or disapproval. If the recommendations must be elevated to a higher level for action, recommendations for approval or disapproval must accompany the proposed suggestion.

ENCLOSURE (1)

ELECTRONIC AND COMPUTER-GENERATED FORMS

1. Electronic and computer-generated forms do not change the definition of a form. All the possible improvements of both the form and procedures through analysis, and all of the standard techniques of effective forms design apply to electronic forms. Electronic forms may be created by:

a. Converting the text lines and symbols into machine language through scanning and digitizing. Through the use of a processor, the form in magnetic or optical storage media is recreated electronically. The image can be displayed on a terminal (CRT) and can be printed onto blank paper, with or without variable data.

b. Creating a form using a computer software program or forms-generation utility (graphic, tablet, mouse, lightpen, keyboard, etc.) and storing in digital form in magnetic or optical media. The form templates may then be displayed on a CRT or created electronically and printed onto blank paper, with or without variable data.

c. Photographing an existing form and mounting the film negative on forms slides in an electronic printer. The printer receives data from a computer and locates the data into the proper blocks on a form created with a laser beam.

d. Storing forms in personal computers, word processors; entering variable data from another program in the keyboard and then outputting by electronic transmission on letter quality or laser printers.

e. Printing out data created or accumulated in a computer on a printout that has blank spaces for additional data or information.

2. Sponsors/Originators

a. Refrain from purchasing forms software packages without obtaining approval from the forms manager.

b. Use personal computers, word processing, and related software packages to develop forms, when practicable. Ensure that existing forms are not duplicated by electronic processes unless written approval from the sponsor/originator and the forms manager have been obtained.

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c. Designate an individual as the focal point for electronic and computer-generated forms. Individuals designated must be familiar with the capabilities and limitations of electronic hardware and software in their organization. Provide the forms manager with the name and telephone number of the designated individual. Coordinate the request to electronically generate a form with and obtain approval in writing from the sponsor/originator of the blank official form.

d. Ensure that the electronic form is a "mirror" image of the blank official form version, unaltered in any way.

e. Coordinate the request to electronically generate the form with the forms manager after obtaining approval from the sponsor/originator.

f. Ensure that the prescribed software and hardware are accessible to all users. When the output product is disk or diskette, provide all users with either copies of the disk or diskette, or purchase copies of the software with operating systems.

h. Promptly advise the forms manager of forms requiring revision or becoming obsolete.

3. Although encouraged, caution must be exercised in the use of new technology such as described above.

4. Factors to be considered when evaluating proposed electronic and computer-generated forms are:

a. Does the preparation method lower the total costs?

b. Does the preparation method increase productivity?

c. Will the new form require expensive or additional training for the user? Will usefulness be lost with reassignment of personnel?

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- d. Does the new form require software maintenance?
- e. Will the data be shared? If so, do all users have compatible software, hardware, and adequate training?
- f. Will the new form require expensive or additional hardware?

Appendix A to
ENCLOSURE (1)

